



**SUPER
PAC**
PARTICIPATORY ARTS COALITION

TOOLKIT



In the midst of this volatile election cycle, what kinds of participatory projects can activate people, reminding us what democracy actually looks like—both within and beyond electoral politics?

With the airwaves full of polarizing rhetoric, what creative public interventions can disrupt narratives of hate, uplifting love, connection, and equity?

USDAC Super PAC (Participatory Arts Coalition) will spur creative public participation leading up to and during the 2016 presidential election, inviting artists and allies to show the country how democracy is practiced. Anyone can join as an *ExtraSuperDelegate*, creating a *Super Public Act of Compassion* or *Super Participatory Act of Culture* that fosters dialogue and connection, activates civic agency, and encourages full democratic participation.

**THIS TOOLKIT WILL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING
YOU NEED TO TAKE PART.**

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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Dear Citizen Artist,

Thanks for stepping up as an ExtraSuperDelegate to take part in **USDAC Super PAC!** You're joining thousands of people across the U.S. who understand that to thrive, democracy needs all our voices and all our creativity.

Super PAC projects can use any art form or creative organizing approach to nourish connection and conversation and to show what democracy actually looks like, reminding us that real democracy depends on our voices being heard. As we planned this national action, we kept in mind how hard those who came before us fought for our rights (including freedom of expression)—rights many don't use. If not now, when?

The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture is a *people-powered department*—a grassroots action network inciting creativity and social imagination to shape a culture of empathy, equity, and belonging.

We envision a society that affirms the right to culture; welcomes each individual as a whole, creative person; values each community's heritage, contributions, and aspirations; promotes care, reciprocity, and open communication across all lines of difference; and dismantles all barriers to love and justice.

In this toolkit, you'll find all you need to host a successful Super PAC event. Please feel free to contact us with questions. You can always reach us at hello@usdac.us.

Together we create!

The USDAC

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ROADMAP

We recommend reading the entire Toolkit, but if you need to prioritize, here's a brief summary of what you'll find in each section, and how you might use the information.

SECTION 1. QUICKSTART GUIDEPAGE 2

Dive right into this national action. *For anyone using this Toolkit.*

SECTION 2. WHAT IS USDAC SUPER PAC?.....PAGE 3

This section describes the origin and aims of USDAC Super PAC. *Useful context for anyone taking part.*

SECTION 3. PROTOTYPE SUPER PAC PROJECTS.....PAGE 4

This section features nine examples of USDAC Super PAC projects to inspire you and if you wish, adapt for your community. *Essential for anyone creating a project.*

MAKE AMERICA CRATE (5); POP-UP STORY BOOTH (7); DEMOCRACY UNCUT: A HEARABLE DIALOGUE ON RACE AND POLICING (9); HISTORY IN THE MAKING: PAPEL PICADO NOW (11); LES AGENTS PROVOCATEURS (14); POP-UP SCREENING (16); BRING YOUR OWN VOICE (18); BUFFALO COMMONS (UN)VOTING FAIR (19); LAWNCARE CAMPAIGN (22).

SECTION 4. DESIGN YOUR OWN SUPER PAC PROJECT.....PAGE 24

This section offers basic guidance for devising your own project rather than adapting a prototype. *For anyone devising an original project.*

SECTION 5. PLANNING & PROMOTING YOUR USDAC SUPER PAC EVENT...PAGE 25

This section focuses on setting up your event and getting the word out to build participation. *Essential for people handling logistics and outreach.*

SECTION 6. GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR USDAC SUPER PAC EVENT..PAGE 28

This section offers tips for making people feel welcome and engaged, building on your event for the future, and sharing images and ideas from your event. *A must for hosts.*

SECTION 7. DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES.....PAGE 30

Links to a free downloadable flyer, social media, instructions, and handouts for USDAC Super PAC. *Especially for anyone doing promotion or running elements of your USDAC Super PAC event.*



1. QUICKSTART GUIDE

STEP ONE: REVIEW SUPER PAC PROTOTYPE PROJECTS

In [Section 3](#) of this Toolkit, “[Prototype Super PAC Projects](#),” you’ll find nine USDAC Super PAC prototype projects designed to inspire. Feel free to replicate or adapt them to your own community and aims. You’ll also find short video about each project in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#).

STEP TWO: PLAN YOUR EVENT

Download the USDAC Super PAC Event Checklist from the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) and follow the steps, finding volunteers as needed to help with setup, takedown, and other tasks.

STEP THREE: PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

Download the Media Promotion Checklist from the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) and follow the steps. Download, adapt, and use the press advisory, model flyer, and social media buttons also available in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#). Look for Super PAC Prototype videos on Facebook and Twitter and please be sure to share them! Be sure to tag all your Super PAC social media posts with #USDAC #SuperPAC so everyone can find them.

STEP FOUR: HOST YOUR EVENT

Welcome people, being sure to capture their names and emails and share them with the USDAC at hello@usdac.us. There’s a signup sheet available from the [Super PAC Public Folder](#). Be sure to thank everyone for taking part!

STEP FIVE: SHARE YOUR DOCUMENTATION

Encourage everyone to post images and short texts documenting your Super PAC events to social media using the hashtags #USDAC #SuperPAC. You will inspire others to create and document their own projects.

TO DOWNLOAD USDAC SUPER PAC MATERIALS

USDAC Super PAC materials are available for download from the [Super PAC Public Folder](#).

When you go to that link, you’ll see a button to the upper right of your window saying “Open in Drive.” Do that, then click on the document you want. Under the File menu, you’ll see “Download as,” giving you all available options. Choose the one you want, then download to your computer.



2. WHAT IS USDAC SUPER PAC?

From September 6–November 7, 2016, the people-powered U.S. Department of Arts and Culture is sponsoring **USDAC Super PAC** to spur creative public participation leading up to the presidential election. We invite artists and allies to show the country how democracy is practiced. Anyone can join **USDAC Super PAC** as an *ExtraSuperDelegate*, creating a *Super Public Act of Compassion* or *Super Participatory Act of Culture* that fosters dialogue and connection, activates civic agency, and encourages full democratic participation.

WHY USDAC SUPER PAC?

With politics awash in big money and a media machine that largely ignores grassroots organizers who raise the critical issues that drive democracy, it's easy to feel like our voices don't count. (And too many literally don't; across the country there are millions who pay taxes but aren't permitted to vote and millions more who are discouraged from exercising that right.) Meanwhile, political debates are opportunities for candidates to spout soundbites and hurl insults. Millions tune in, watching and squirming, tweeting, and fuming. Aren't there better ways to engage with each other, moving from debate to dialogue at this critical time?

In the midst of this volatile election cycle, what participatory projects can activate communities and remind us what democracy actually looks like—both within and beyond electoral politics?

With the airwaves full of polarizing rhetoric, what creative public interventions can disrupt narratives of hate, uplifting love, connection, and equity?

In contrast to conventional PACs designed to fuel politics with money, **USDAC Super PAC** is an act of full cultural citizenship, where every voice counts and every ear listens. Become an ExtraSuperDelegate and take part!

WHAT USDAC SUPER PAC CAN ACCOMPLISH

We like to say that the USDAC is an act of collective imagination. Everything created must first be imagined, and that goes for the future of our communities and of democracy. Through local organizing and National Actions such as the annual People's State of the Union, we are crowd-sourcing a vision of communities shaped by the power of art and culture, where creativity, empathy, equity, and justice are ordinary and everywhere.

Locally, **USDAC Super PAC** events can introduce people to new neighbors and new ways of interacting and collaborating that reinforce the deeply democratic idea that everyone's voice counts. We will put Super PAC-inspired ideas into national circulation through publications, videos, and social media. Each time they spread, they will bring us closer to the future foreseen in our act of collective imagination. It's up to all of us!

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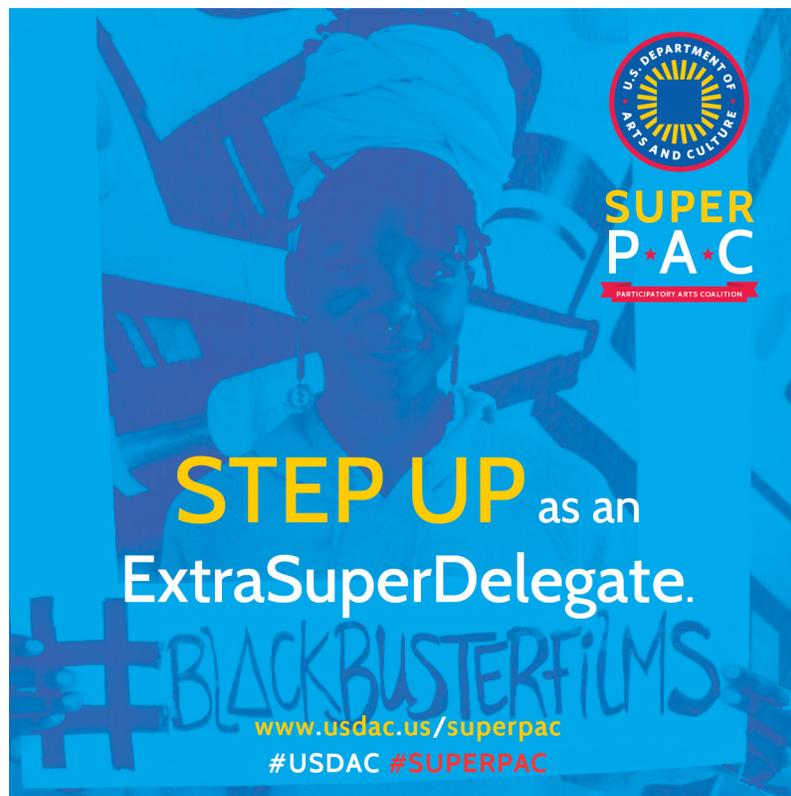
3. PROTOTYPE SUPER PAC PROJECTS

The following nine projects were selected in May to serve as prototypes, offering models that can be replicated or adapted to local aims and conditions. To receive a micro-grant, each one had to satisfy the following criteria:

- Take place no later than 15 July 2016.
- Be participatory and replicable.
- Require no more than \$300 in out-of-pocket costs (no limit on scrounged or donated materials or space, though).
- Generate written, photo, and video documentation for this Toolkit and other uses.

Feel free to adapt any of these projects as you wish. You can find videos and additional documentation in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#).

Or if you want to design your own project, see [Section 4, below: Planning & Promoting Your Project](#).



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MAKE AMERICA CRATE



THE IDEA: CREATE A GIANT, PORTABLE SOAPBOX FOR WAXING POETIC ON THE NATURE OF AMERICA.

CONTACT:

m.o.i. aka The Minister of Information
moi@warriorantpress.com

Make America Crate uses an overturned, industrial-sized crate to create a platform for public speaking. The platform can be set up anywhere. It is designed to get people to reclaim their public voices and to speak their minds clearly. Everyone has a voice; the Crate offers a chance to elevate those voices above the fray.

The project actively encourages citizens to voice their notions of democracy. Others see and hear those voices and react to them. Such events subvert the tendency for politicians to always have the center stage of dialogue. They thus demystify the notion that voters largely remain outside of political discourse. The project honors people-driven, rather than media-centered, democracy. Make America Crate explores the past, ennobles the present, and empowers the future of America.

Industrial crates can often be reclaimed at little or no cost. We acquired a ULINE (model 1738) crate from a local nonprofit in exchange for volunteering some of our time.

Our platform was 4 by 5 by 3 feet high—a small stage—reinforced from below, ringed with patriotic paraphernalia and a guardrail constructed of brooms. Brooms were chosen because democracy isn't really neat or tidy. Being a citizen of the republic requires work. One could also use shovels. In lieu of a crate, one could build a platform. But keep in mind weight, transport, and set-up and break-down times when constructing it.

Decorate the crate patriotically (however you define that) to focus intent. Seed it with historical quotes to set the tone. Think about the audience and the location you're activating and choose decorations and quotes accordingly. We chose three quotes from U.S. Presidential nominating conventions previously held in Kansas City (the site of our activations), selecting quotes that seemed as fresh today as when they were spoken, those that would tend to inspire rather than rebuke.



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To start your action, set your completed Make America Crate in a public space. You'll need to monitor it, help people on and off it, offer prompts, and facilitate the ensuing conversations. We asked people to talk about “what makes America” or “how to make America.” From those prompts we allowed speakers the freedom to say whatever they wished.

For documentation you can attach a GoPro to one of the broom handles or use a digital camera or cell phone to record the oration.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Heavy-duty HPDE industrial crate
- ¼-inch painted plywood for decking to cover top of crate
- US Flag(s), dimensions can vary
- Five-stripe bunting, 12 yards
- Small stepladder
- Various brooms
- Staple gun (for attaching bunting)
- Cordless drill (for other attachments)
- 3 inch cabinet screws (to attach rails to crate)
- 1 inch screws (to attach signage)
- Furniture dolly (for moving crate)
- Signage for crate, approximately 2 ft by 3 ft. Print on material that will withstand the expected environmental elements.



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POP-UP STORY BOOTH



THE IDEA: USE A POP-UP STORY BOOTH TO INCREASE AWARENESS ABOUT AND DISCUSSION OF CHANGES AFFECTING A COMMUNITY.

CONTACT:

Ali Toxtli: atoxtli@my.hpu.edu

Pop-up Story-booth was made by a team of three artists in our community space in Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY. The community of Bushwick has been historically neglected and is now undergoing rapid gentrification. Our aim was to increase awareness of the Bushwick rezoning process, which is taking place with very little attention and participation on the part of community members, despite the fact that they will be directly impacted.

We distributed flyers in Spanish and English. We set up the booth in a local park where we anticipated finding people who are not included in the official democratic process because of racism, immigration status, and/or language access. We found sunset hours were the best time to catch people. We invited participants without making them feel pressured.

We set up the booth four times on weekend afternoons during the month of July to present information about the Bushwick rezoning process and document people's testimonies through audio and video recordings. These will be transcribed and delivered to local City Council members. Community members were invited to recall important places or stories of their neighborhood, as well as paint or draw illustrations of their stories.

Here are some of the questions we asked:

- Are you a Bushwick resident? How long have you been living in the neighborhood?
- Why did you choose to live in Bushwick? What are your ties to this neighborhood?
- Are you familiar with the process of rezoning?
- Have you observed significant changes taking place in the neighborhood? How do you feel about the changes?
- Is there anything you'd like to see more of in the neighborhood?
- Why did you choose to participate in this project?

After sharing stories we invited people to do any or all of these things:

- Take a portrait.
- Mark their place of residence on the map.
- Write a thought/impression on a sticky note about the feelings, thoughts, ideas that stemmed from our talk.



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We also invited people to follow us on Instagram: @realidades_migrantes.

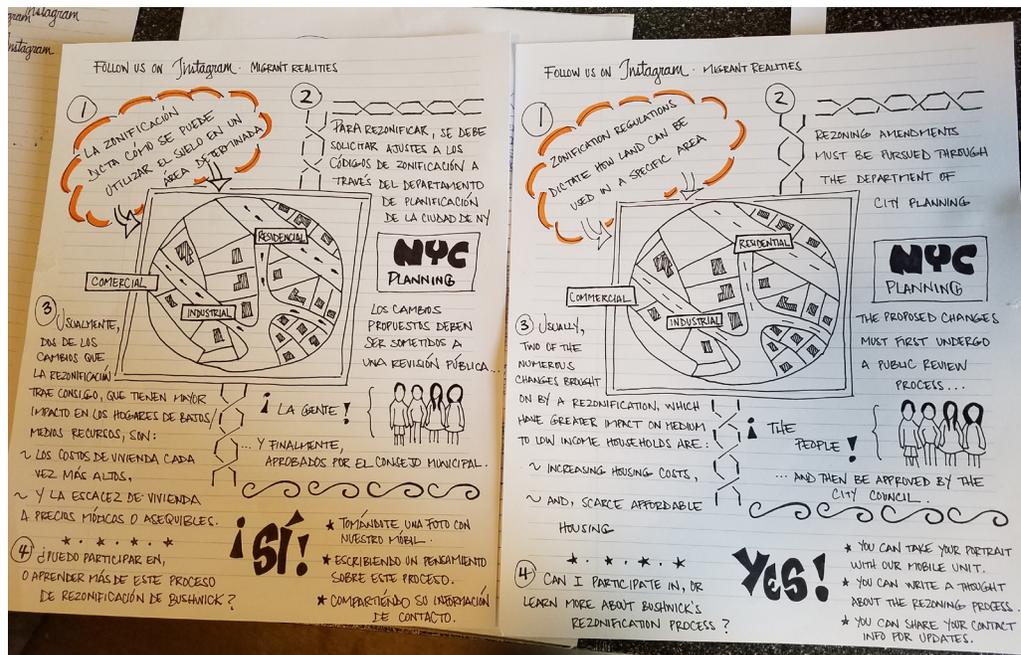
Our booth is made of corrugated plastic posterboard sitting on top of a shopping cart, held up by PVC tubes. It includes a makeshift backdrop for taking portraits—a gray blanket hung on a seven-foot cardboard cylinder. We used Bushwick zoning maps provided by a Council member’s office.

The essential thing is to understand where people are coming from and how cultural, linguistic, and regional differences play into it. Some might not want to write things down, think the idea is not worth it, or not want to be on camera. Just connecting with one person, hearing them out, exchanging info makes it all worth it and necessary! We learned that you need three people to successfully carry out anything, especially if you want to document it. We also learned that less is more: carry only what you need. Reach out to local elected officials for community resources such as maps. Active community engagement is key. This work will move a lot of emotions. Be easy on yourself.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- A laundry cart
- Good smartphone
- Pens
- Markers
- Post-its
- Clipboards
- Paint
- Brushes
- PVC pipe
- Saw
- Zip ties
- Old blanket
- Screws
- A drill
- 36x30 corrugated plastic poster board
- A box cutter
- A 7-foot cardboard tube

Please repurpose and recycle materials!



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DEMOCRACY UNCUT: A HEARABLE DIALOGUE ON RACE AND POLICING



THE IDEA: CREATE A HEARABLE DIALOGUE TO PROMOTE SOLUTIONS-DRIVEN PUBLIC CONVERSATION ON RACE AND POLICING.

CONTACT:

John Sankofa: john.sankofa@gmail.com

Our team of eight—including videographers, editors, and producers—set out to create a video documentary on race and social justice, using an approach that allows each interviewed person the chance to respond without interruption or interjection. Each speaker is interviewed separately, expressing individual views and commenting on video footage of other speakers. The conceptual premise of the project is: “I can’t hear you when you’re screaming at me.” Our aim was to create a frank but hearable dialogue on race.

We wanted to capture public opinions—from the left, the right, and the center—focusing on four specific themes:

- (1) effect of race on policing;
- (2) personal experience with police;
- (3) viewpoint on officers killed in Dallas and Baton Rouge; and
- (4) solutions for improving policing in minority communities.

The footage is being made into a video documentary, which we will use as a spark for solutions-driven public

dialogue on race and policing at community forums, academic conferences, town halls, and other venues. But a fully produced documentary doesn’t have to be the end-product of this Super PAC: imagine featuring video “dialogues” captured in this way on a website, making short YouTube videos featuring just a couple of exchanges on a specific topic, or showing an uncut sequence of interviews as a conversation-starter at a public forum, followed by discussion.

Too often Americans move about their daily lives without truly listening to each others’ stories and experiences. This is especially true regarding the experience of race in America. When we do talk about race, it’s often in response to racial crisis—and the ensuing dialogue is usually so loud and so desperate



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that it sometimes feels too painful to hear.

In light of police-involved shootings near Minneapolis (Alton Sterling) and Baton Rouge (Philando Castile), and the deaths of five officers in Dallas and three officers in Baton Rouge, we decided to focus specifically on the issue of race and policing.

We conducted our video interview on July 17, 2016, using random participants attending the Artscape 2016 event in Baltimore. On that same day, three officers were killed in Baton Rouge, and 65 anti-police brutality protestors were arrested at Artscape 2016. Participants were interviewed between 1:00pm and 7:30pm, at the Charles Street pavilion at Penn Station (where protestors were arrested).

We allotted each interviewee approximately five minutes to discuss the four themes listed above.

If you use this project model, we advise you to carefully preplan your equipment needs, consulting with someone who has the requisite skills. It was more of a challenge for us to recruit conservative thinkers on social justice issues—we don't have those connections. If we were doing this again, we'd allow time for relationship-building that could engage people who are coming from that perspective.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Two camcorders
- A tripod
- A boom microphone
- video editing software



HISTORY IN THE MAKING: PAPEL PICADO NOW



THE IDEA: DRAWING ON THE MEXICAN FOLK ART TRADITION OF CUT PAPER, CREATE POWERFUL MESSAGES IN ART.

CONTACT:

Karina Puente: karina@karinapuentearts.com

This project aims to amplify visibility for Latinx artists while teaching people how to create powerful messages in art that can move the needle on conversations about social equality. In workshop settings, groups of children or adults add decorations and cut written messages into sheets of tissue, which are then displayed to spark reflection and discussion.

Latinxs in the U.S. have been on the receiving end of harsh bias, bigotry, and new levels of racism during the 2016 election. Papel Picado is an important art form that can be adjusted to almost any skill level and can disrupt narratives of hate because it is beautiful, fun to make, and gets people talking. When people discuss injustice, those conversations often lead to action steps we can take to create a more inclusive world.

Papel Picado is rich with cultural heritage. Cut paper artwork has deep roots in Mexico and in almost every world culture. Paper cutting as an art form is borderless and can be modified to meet the needs of shifting communities.

TWO SIMPLE WORKSHOPS IN PAPEL PICADO:

BEGINNERS WORKSHOP:

NOTE: Please see the PDF illustrated guide in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) for details on how to fold/cut/and adhere your tissue paper Papel Picado artwork to your piece of twine. Hang

finished art work in a window, classroom, or city hall.

- (1) Start by folding each individual piece of tissue paper in four folds total (per sheet).
- (2) Cut the corners using a 1 inch diagonal cut.
- (3) Cut small triangles into the sides of the folded tissue paper.
- (4) Unfold the tissue paper and apply a line of glue/or double-sided tape to the top of the paper.



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(5) Working with a partner, attach one end of a length of twine to the glue or double sided tape and repeat until you have a “clothes line” banner display of your artwork.

ADVANCED WORKSHOP

(Begin by printing the PDF Template of your choice. “Black Lives Matter” or “We Count” or “La Gente Unida” are provided in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) as stencil guides for cutting.)

(1) Start by laying the PDF stencil guide print-out on top of 5 sheets of 8.5'x11" tissue paper. Align the edges of your paper and paper clip the sides to hold them in place.

(2) Carefully cut each letter and image with your exacto knife. Always keep the hand without the exacto knife above the hand holding the knife, so you don't accidentally cut yourself. (See PDF illustration)

(3) After your image is cut out, attach the top of your Papel Picado artwork to twine using double sided tape or glue. Hang in a window, class room, or outside a voting office.

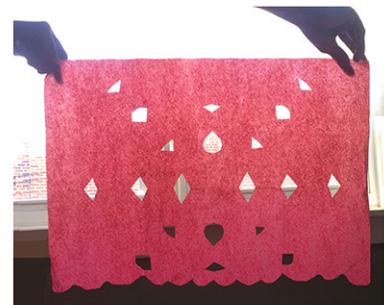
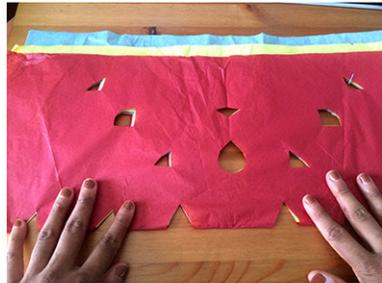
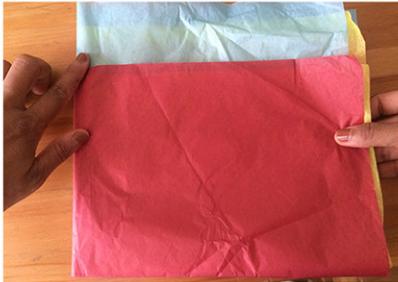
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Printer to print out PDFs
- Glue sticks or double-sided tape
- Scissors for each participant
- Exacto knives and paper clips (for the Advanced workshop)
- 5 sheets of tissue paper for each participant
- Stickers (optional for younger children)
- Twine
- Pencils
- Markers



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Papel Picado | Basic Fold and Cut



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LES AGENTS PROVOCATEURS



THE IDEA: TO CREATE A FORM OF PUBLIC THEATER OPEN TO MASS PARTICIPATION.

CONTACT:

Peter Gaffney: dr.peter.gaffney@gmail.com

This Super PAC project was the first phase of a larger scheme to coordinate simultaneous flash-mob performances in public spaces in a global trans-media theater experience. The next phase will put in place a network of theater companies that have a shared interest in creating acts of political theater in public spaces.

An idea like this can be adapted to any plot-line relevant to democracy. In this instance, *Les Agents Provocateurs* is the story of a task force with an ironic mission. The performers use flash-mob theatrical tactics—which have often been deployed in the context of things like Occupy that are critical of consumerism—to win back popular support for a culture of obedient consumerism. It was inspired by things like the Yes Men, where artists impersonate corporate officials with the ultimate intention of showing the bankruptcy of their actions and ideas.

In *Les Agents Provocateurs* five performers dressed in riot gear try to sing and dance their way into the hearts and minds of the people. In media coverage of pop-up performances, spokespeople for Les Agents will insist that “these guys just love to dance.” But the real story is about the culture industry in its relation to structures of power...and what we can do to directly take part in the way culture shapes our public spaces and attitudes towards artistic inquiry.

As the project grows, we will offer inexpensive ways of creating costumes, distributing digital patterns for use in repurposing/transforming discarded plastic bags and bottles, polystyrene foam, cardboard and paper products, and other materials into Les Agents uniforms and tactical gear. We also provide suggested choreography and music, so that the performance can be enacted anywhere.

Check the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) for downloadable written and recorded music and choreography notes. You'll also find instructions for making props and costumes. Most elements were made of paper maché using plaster of Paris molds made from actual helmets, shin and knee guards, shoulder guards, and elbow guards. The chest armor was made from black canvas and used no-slip foam bathroom mats. Clear plastic bowls were used to make helmet visors.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

MOLDS

- 20 liter plastic bucket
- Plaster of Paris, 25 kg
- Garbage bags
- Cardboard boxes
- Duct tape or other heavy duty tape

TOOLS

- Saw (handsaw, chop saw, radial arm saw)
- Small clamps (at least 2 or 4, 6 or 8 for larger production)
- Scissors (for cutting paper, fabric, paper maché, etc.)

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- Carpenter or draftsman's pencil
- Hammer
- Chiseling tools with flat and curved edge (8 mm wide)
- Soft measuring tape (tailor's tape)
- Paint brushes
- Needle-nose pliers
- Printer and paper

SUPPLIES

- Black paint, mat (1/2 liter makes 5 costumes)
- Sand paper, coarse and fine
- Wood glue
- Textile glue
- Tacks (flat head, steel)
- Elastic (25 mm and 75 mm wide)
- Brown builder's paper (2 rolls, 35in x 140ft)
- Velcro (equal amounts male and female, 20 mm)
- Heavy duty polyurethane back coated nylon material (2 meters makes appx. 5 costumes)
Thin foam (foam carpet underlay, foam bath mat, or anti-slip mat, or listed under the code DzSP506dz)
- Wood dowel (15 mm diameter, 3cm total per costume)
- Round clear plastic wash basin, appx. 32cm diameter (1 makes 3 costumes)
- M5 30mm hex bolts (2), washers (4), nuts (2)



POP-UP SCREENING



THE IDEA: TO SPARK DIALOGUE ABOUT EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE IT BY HOLDING A FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION ON A PUBLIC STREET.

CONTACT:

Khamall Howard: khamall.howard@gmail.com

Blackbuster is part of an artistic community that finds its epicenter on 15th Street in downtown Oakland, CA. We go around the community presenting films and leading discussions about the thoughts and feelings they invoke. Our idea was to construct a 5'x8' screen and offer a movie night that invites people from within and without that community to see film that represents the black imagination and the black perspective in media, followed by discussion.

We also documented the screening with a photobooth: a picture frame made of poster board. People framed their faces and looked into the camera for a collaborative self-portrait.

A very white Hollywood has always been held up by the cultural influence of Africans. It is hidden although no secret to those awake. This installation exemplifies that relationship. Without the arches to keep it stable and erect, the glorious screen is nothing but an empty canvas. Only with the addition of sound does it come alive and with light the expression is brightened. This tells the story of humanity. Separately we are deemed to fend for ourselves and our destiny is up to fate, but together as one cohesive unit we have no bounds, just good times.

We provide a space for people to heal through film, to witness the most ancient yet fortified African storytelling tradition turned art form in its optimal state. Media does a lot of the

brainwashing. This is a chance to cleanse people's worldview. The films open us up, then the talk helps us collectively come up with solutions/responses to combat issues we deal with on a day-to-day basis or concepts that are usually swept under the rug.

This prototype project was organized through weeks of team meetings, conference calls, and Google docs. I had the vision for the screen and arch for awhile. Once we got the resources to execute it, we stayed in constant communication until it was done. I borrowed cars to get to Home Depot and paint from friends who could lend some extra. This project was the result of diligent teamwork.

My most important advice is this: Ask for any help you need and be clear. My greatest issues came from not addressing problems that came to people as they arose. While letting them fester, things got out of my control. Always have a backup power source. Most importantly make sure the entire process is fun!



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SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

SCREEN:

- 2 pieces of 8ft 1x2in of lightweight wood
- 4 pieces of 5ft 1x2in of lightweight wood
- 4 pieces of 2ft 1x2in of lightweight wood
- Staple gun
- 1 hammer
- 2 screw hook
- 6x9 ft white canvas roll
- Scissors
- 1 pint of white paint

FRAME:

- 1 can of black spray paint
- 8 nails
- 2 cinder blocks
- 1 hammers
- 2 screw hooks
- 2 pieces of 6ft 2x4in pieces of wood
- 1 piece of 3ft 2x4in pieces of wood

PHOTOBOOTH:

- Poster board
- Marker
- Scissors



BRING YOUR OWN VOICE



THE IDEA: BY HELPING PEOPLE SHARE THEIR VOICES IN PUBLIC SPACES, BRING YOUR OWN VOICE REINVIGORATES ONE OF THE MOST BASIC ASPECTS OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION—SPEAKING UP.

CONTACT:

Josh Adler: usdacpoet@gmail.com

Bring Your Own Voice (BYOV) invites readers to perform a tribute to one of their favorite writers. The project invites cross-pollination possibilities of influential thinkers and linguistics from historical, contemporary, and underrepresented voices, while giving participants a chance to curate their own reading selection from a sense of personal connection. When people BYOV, they unify their passion for equity with their literary faculties.

Each BYOV event consists of a series of readings followed by discussion. Usually, several excerpts are read before a 10- or 15-minute discussion period.

Ideally, BYOV is planned for an accessible venue, such as a library, a museum, or a public park. That way, you can share promotion and access a built-in audience. Each event should focus on a theme—for Super PAC, it's democracy. Signing people up in advance to read gives them an opportunity to reflect on what they'll share and bring it with them. But you can also bring along a small collection of relevant titles and invite people to choose a selection to read on the spot.

Video and/or audio documentation of readings allows the performances to be shared and archived online.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Promotion via social media, email, and/or flyers
- A venue with seating, whether library chairs or park benches
- A collection of books on a chosen theme
- Microphone, if needed for the venue
- Audio or video recording equipment, to document BYOV and share online



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BUFFALO COMMONS (UN)VOTING FAIR



THE IDEA: A MULTI-ACTIVITY EVENT THAT ENGAGES PARTICIPANTS IN INCLUSIVE, ARTS-BASED DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.

CONTACT:

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The Buffalo Commons (Un)Voting Fair is a playful participatory event that offers several activities representing different aspects of the democratic process, imagined and experienced in new ways where all can be included.

Participants are given a venue in which they can speak their voice and be heard, make art and write about what they want and need to feel included in our democracy, what matters to them, and what they expect from an elected official who truly represents them.

Art and photos and writings are collected and posted in "People's Report," an online 'zine mailed to every candidate on the November 2016 ballot. Such an event could also be used to feed a public art installation or exhibit.

The Buffalo Commons name is adapted from an idea developed by Drs. Frank and Deborah Popper in the late 1980s as a conservation and restoration plan for the Great Plains region. Where dry conditions and extractive land-use models had damaged the landscape and drained water resources, resulting in human depopulation, they proposed national grasslands and new economies for the remaining humans.

Kansas, not unlike our nation at large, is experiencing political ideologies applied with devastating effects. From our economy to our voting rights, we are being devalued

and undermined, exploited and abandoned. I conceived this fair to give people hope, recourse, respite, voice. As I began planning this event, Congress named the Buffalo our national mammal. So anyone could use some version of this name for an event that holds up our history, witnesses it, and then reimagines it forward in an entirely inclusive way.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- (Un)Voting Booth (ours is constructed of pvc pipe, 6' h X 3' w X 3' d, with white cloth curtains that we painted and a notched board that rests on pvc sidebars in the frame. Board serves as a writing surface. Old sheets and an appliance box could also be used)
- Cardboard box with slot to collect papers from (Un)Voting Booth
- Several feet of rope or twine
- Old political yard signs, painted white
- Long tables with plastic cloth to cover
- Paint, markers, pencils
- Paintbrushes, water cans or buckets
- Blankets for picnic
- Soap box (sturdy wooden box that people can stand on without tipping, labeled for fun)
- Megaphone (real one or poster board rolled and taped)
- Paper (8.5" X 11")
- "Ballots" with check-boxes and prompts, space for writing

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- Video and sound equipment or iPhone for recording
- Paper scraps, old magazines, brads, sticks for pinwheels
- Clipboard
- Stickers (preprinted)
- Paper scraps for burning questions/lightning answers, bucket to put them in, pencils
- Permissions/waivers for photo/video capture

PERSONNEL:

- Greeter/Barker
- Caucus manager
- (Un)Voting Booth assistant/explainer
- Art Table assistant(s)
- Volunteers (poets, advocates, historic re-enactors, etc.) to speak on soapbox
- Interviewer
- Videographer
- Thanks-giver/hugger/sticker distributor

PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

- Planning meetings to design ballot, handbills, stickers, and define roles and timeline.
- Artmaking party to construct the un-voting booth, paint the curtains, make a couple of example yard signs, create event signage.

ACTIVITY STATIONS FOR THE EVENT:

(All or some subset of these stations can be used for an action, and parts can be eliminated to streamline or simplify.)

- **Forest of Yard signs:** “Step Right Up!” “Speak your Voice!” “Democracy is Community!”, for example.
- **Caucusing:** (happens within a circle of rope or twine laying on the ground) Real dialogue, prompted by (A) “Burning Questions, Lightning Answers”: write a question that you want to know the answer to right now. Ask your question of someone else within the circle, give them a minute to answer. Then

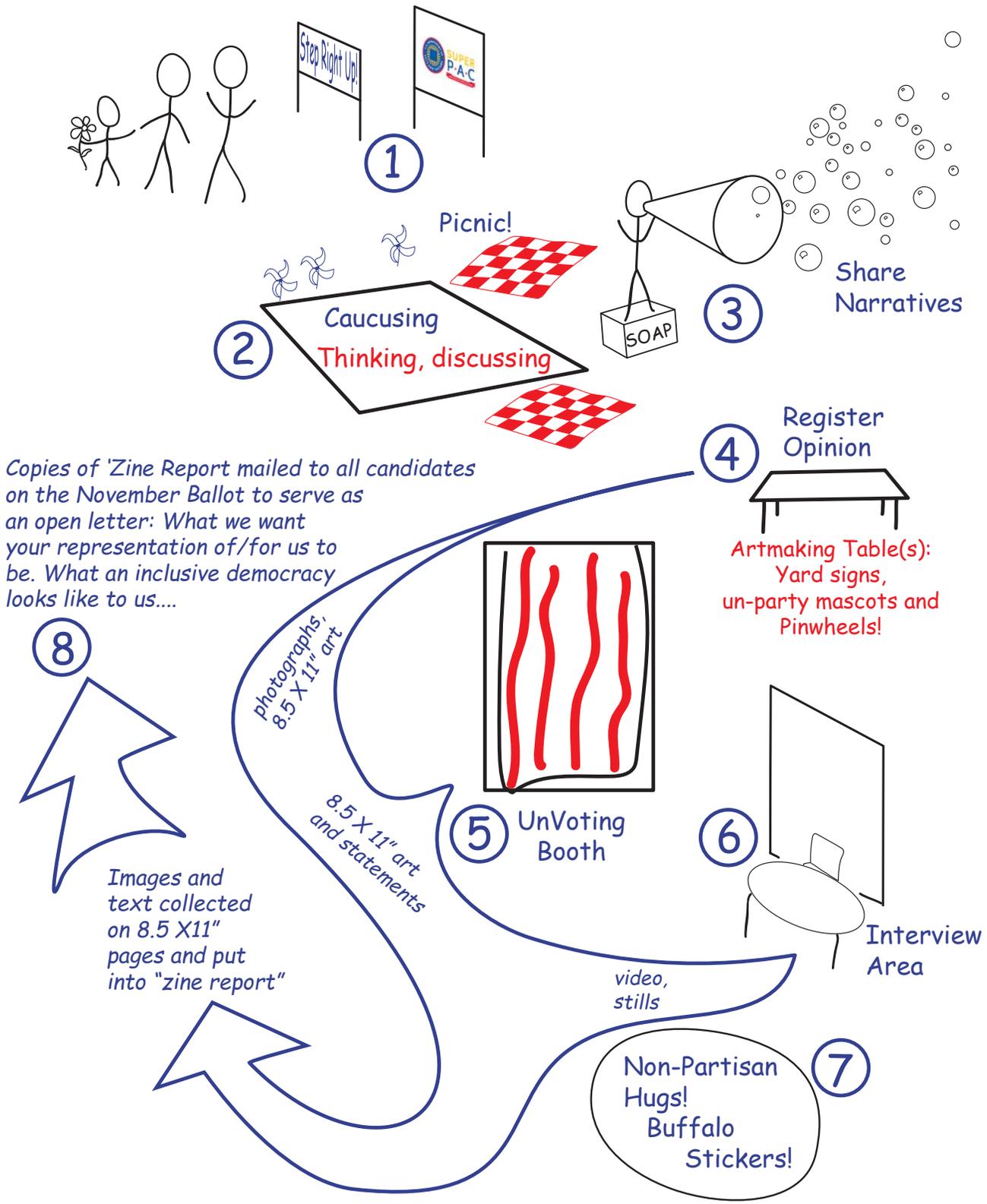
take a minute to answer their question. (B) “Circle-as-a-Census”: Ask a series of yes-or-no questions, have all those who answer yes step inside of circle, no stands outside. (Are you a registered voter, did you vote in the last election, are you satisfied with..., do you garden...make your own list of questions. Document how many answer yes or no.

- **3-minute, Epithet-free Speeches:** Line up poets, speakers, historic re-enactors, folks off the streets, youth, to get up and model process.
- **Artmaking:** Design/draw/paint (A) a mascot or logo that represents you, (B) a sign that represents your vision of an inclusive democracy, (C) pinwheels of recycled materials for children or inspired adults and teens. The idea is to have something that someone of any age can do.
- **(Un)voting Booth:** Prompts and directions in English and Spanish (or other languages) which could include “I vote because...” or “I would not vote because...” or “What I hold important” or “What I need my representative to understand/know to properly represent me.”
- **Interviews or Stills** with yard sign or mascot image creations. Get signed permissions forms first.
- Everyone is given an event sticker. And a hug, if okay to ask/give.

AFTER THE EVENT:

- Photocopies of images and statements are stapled or fastened into “report” covers, and sent to all candidates on the November ballot here in our City, plus any candidates for Congress from other districts within the State. This will also be scanned and made into a pdf.

Buffalo Commons (Un)Voting Fair!



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LAWNCARE CAMPAIGN



THE IDEA: USE LAWN SIGNS TO PROMOTE REAL, POSITIVE VALUES INSTEAD OF POLITICAL CANDIDATES.

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What if political ads promoted real values instead of candidates? What if we could encourage people in our own communities to choose positive behaviors? The LawnCare Campaign empowers community members to create their own political-style yard signs to advertise not a person or party, but an idea, a quality, a platform they will take responsibility for upholding. Choose hope. Vote for peace. Elect generosity.

The skyrocketing cost of political campaigns in this country demonstrates the concentration of power and amplification that money can give to speech. LawnCare enlarges the frame from choosing between the ideologies of pre-selected elite individuals or political parties. It allows participants to express directly the basic positive values they want to see enacted, those they will take action to promote in their own neighborhoods.

This workshop was developed by the Intersect Arts Center in St. Louis as a way for local youth to infuse their neighborhoods with the qualities they believe are integral to healthy community. The gesture may be small, but to those who perform it, it's an important and empowering step toward reclaiming democratic participation. As we make these signs, we reflect on the disconnect between American politics, policy, and lived experience on our streets. LawnCare calls for a form of personal action, expression and participation

in creating a more meaningful and accountable community.

This project was organized by two artists working with a local park. The two-hour pilot event was held on a Saturday as part of Intersect Arts Center's summer event series. The pilot events took place both outdoors and in an arts classroom at a nonprofit space.



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Coroplast (corrugated plastic) 18x24” yard signs were printed on one side with the Lawncare campaign graphic in a single color. For ease in working with young kids and shy adults, screen prints were made ahead of time. Participants could chose from four options.

Participants were also encouraged to design their own signs with a personal choice of words. Signs were taken home or placed throughout the neighborhood. Leftover signs were given to other local arts or youth groups to incorporate as an activity in their own programming.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 2 adults
- Coroplast yard signs and yard stakes
- Permanent paint pens
- Screen printing supplies (optional for more professional looking effect)
- Stencils/letters to trace (optional but helpful)





4. DESIGN YOUR OWN SUPER PAC PROJECT

The possibilities for **USDAC Super PAC** projects are nearly unlimited. You can use any venue, artform, or mode of interaction. What matters most is that your project be shaped by Super PAC values and objectives:

- stir meaningful connection and conversation in this polarized moment;
- disrupt narratives of hate, uplifting love, connection, and equity;
- activate a sense of agency and encourage democratic participation (within and/or beyond electoral politics);
- remind us that those who came before us fought for our rights (including voting)—rights many don't use;
- embody what democracy actually looks like, reminding us that democracy depends on our voices being heard.

Beyond that, we urge that your project conform to the parameters set for **USDAC Super PAC** prototypes, laying out no more than \$300 in hard costs, and scrounging or repurposing as much as possible. This sets the bar for participation at a low and welcoming level, inviting anyone who admires your project to repeat or adapt it for themselves.

As you plan your project, it will be helpful to consider these questions:

- ***What do you want your project to communicate?*** Your message will help to shape your activities.
- ***Whom do you wish to attract?*** This Toolkit and the materials in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#) will help you reach out to the people you hope will be involved.
- ***What arts-based skills and techniques will be involved?*** Knowing who possesses and is willing to share those will help build your team.
- ***Where will it take place?*** And what does that say about accessibility, transportability, and the need for assistance in setting things up and taking them down?
- ***What materials and supplies will you need,*** and where will you get them?
- ***How will people interact with your Super PAC project?*** Do you want to stay connected in future? There are ideas in this Toolkit about welcoming and engaging folks and about following up after your event(s).
- ***How will you document and share what emerges?*** Images or messages posted to social media—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram—with the hashtag #USDAC (please add the #SuperPAC tag too) will reach the USDAC. We hope to use as much as possible in our own blogs and social media, and ask you to repost, retweet, or otherwise share **USDAC Super PAC** social media when you see it. Please keep us posted when you share, and we'll amplify.

Questions? Contact us at hello@usdac.us.

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5. PLANNING & PROMOTING YOUR PROJECT

Hosting a **USDAC Super PAC** project is a great way to add engagement, excitement, and power to your work whether you're an artist, educator, organizer, or an organization. Why get involved? Here are some of the things taking part can do:

- Engage people who may not already be involved in creative activism by offering meaningful and fun activities.
- Offer an easy and rewarding way to take part in your arts or organizing work.
- Inspire people to do something to improve the state of democracy.
- Generate images and ideas that reach far beyond the event where they were first shared.
- Create goodwill and forge relationships as a foundation for people working together again.

CUSTOMIZING YOUR USDAC SUPER PAC PROJECT

A **USDAC Super PAC** project can use any art form and method of engagement. Alongside your main event, participants can create visual art, write and share poems, devise a performance, make a video, deliver creative oratory, perform a public dance, and much, much more.

Regardless of the main event of your project, adding other elements can attract participants and deepen engagement. Here are a few other possibilities. You could:

- Turn the event into a potluck or ask a sponsor to donate refreshments.
- Screen USDAC videos (you'll find them [here](#)).
- Ask participants to add ideas to a bulletin board or suggestion box for ways they'd like to come together again in future.
- Lead people to actions beyond the Super PAC event. Offer easy steps visitors can take to move to broader engagement.
- Provide takeaway information at your event. Invite folks to learn more about how to respond constructively to what's been revealed through your Super PAC project by picking up literature you've provided.

Each **USDAC Super PAC** event will reflect the people who take part. Carefully consider whom you're hoping to attract. If you hope certain voices will be present—young people, for instance, or recent immigrants—try to partner with organizations they trust, use a welcoming venue, and take the time to personally invite them so everyone feels welcome.

ENSURING YOUR EVENT FLOWS

The flow of your event will depend on what activities are included. Here are some things to consider:

- **Setup and final preparations.** If you're using volunteers, make sure they arrive for final preparations and training at least an hour before the posted start-time.

- **Welcome.** Twenty minutes prior to the announced start time, get ready to welcome arrivals with a warm greeting, a sign-in sheet and name tags (or whichever of the three fits your event). You can find a sign-in sheet in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#). When people are gathering together in



a public space (as opposed to an event where folks drop in and out), it will help people get oriented and feel welcome if they are greeted and given a bit of orientation.

- **Introduction:** People feel more comfortable when they know what to expect. For a gathering (as opposed to a drop-in-anytime event), everyone should be called together and seated in one big group. The host can then welcome people, briefly explaining what is going to happen. In your welcome, be sure to include a little bit about the USDAC and the Super PAC.

- **Closing:** Mark the end of a formal large-group gathering with thanks to all. If you can, encourage people to stay around for refreshments and socializing.

- **Clean-up/breakdown.** Be sure to secure enough volunteers to help with takedown of chairs, equipment, and structures, and recycling and disposal of materials.

SETTING UP SPACE

If you're planning a larger public event, be mindful of access. Things to consider include:

- Is the space you've chosen easy to get to? Is there adequate public transit and/or parking?
- Is the space you have lined up wheelchair accessible? Is there an ADA bathroom on the premises?
- Are children welcome to participate in the event? If not, it can be easy and rewarding to coordinate volunteer or rotating child care at or near where the event is happening.
- Do you need sign language interpreters?
- Is the space you've chosen inviting and easily accessible to members of the community or communities you are hoping to involve? Is there any reason people wouldn't feel welcome there?

SIGNING-IN

You'll want to capture participants' names and emails for your own follow-up and keeping in touch with the USDAC. If it is possible to have a computer handy, you can either have someone typing names and emails or ask people to type their own names and email addresses into the [USDAC website](#) as they enter. Or you can download and print out the Sign-in Sheet in the [USDAC Super PAC Public Folder](#) and ask people to legibly print their own names and email addresses. If possible, we'd appreciate your typing out the names and emails after the event, as handwriting can be hard

to decipher. Please send completed sign-in information to hello@usdac.us: either just email us the names/email addresses or scan the sign-in sheet and attach to an email.

NAME TAGS

Providing name tags is a good way to make people feel welcome and noticed if your event is taking place in an enclosed space or people are sticking around for a while. It's nice (but not essential) to have a collection of colored markers so people can decorate their own name tags. But even if they are just one color, be sure to have markers so people can print their names large enough to be seen by others.

PROMOTING YOUR SUPER PAC EVENT

In the USDAC [Super PAC Public Folder](#), you'll find customizable templates for flyers, press releases, and social media images you can post to Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram. Feel free to download and use these, or create your own. You'll also find a [Media Promotion Checklist](#) there offering more detailed advice and information.

For optimal impact, at least three weeks before your event, begin promoting it in as many of these ways as you choose:

- Contact local media outlets to pitch feature stories and radio appearances.
- Collect the deadlines of the relevant publicity outlets and distribute press releases.
- Ask local organizations to pitch your Super PAC event to their members.
- Create a Facebook page to build participation in your event, and/or promote it on your existing Facebook pages.
- Create a Twitter hashtag for your event, using the main USDAC hashtag too. For instance, [#USDAC](#) [#SuperPAC](#) [#YourTownName](#).
- Adapt the USDAC model flyer and post throughout your community.

CHECKLISTS

If your Super PAC event is public and large-scale, for help in planning, be sure to download the [USDAC Super PAC Event Checklist](#) and [Media Promotion Checklist](#) you'll find in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#).



6. GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR PROJECT

ENSURING POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

Most people will enjoy taking part in your **USDAC Super PAC** event, but there are possible challenges. If you're aware of these, you can avoid them.

- **Multigenerational.** The folks that show up at your event may include small children and elders, teenagers and parents. Be aware of making space for everyone. Describe activities so everyone can understand. Model an attitude of cheerful welcome for everyone: you don't want kids to feel their participation doesn't count or elders to feel no one wants to hear from them.
- **Respecting and including differences.** When strangers show up in the same place, there's a potential for awkwardness. As a host, you need to keep an eye out for potential challenges and make a special effort to include everyone. If people look uncomfortable, they probably are. For a large-scale event, it really helps to have greeters on hand to show everyone the way. Volunteers who are showing up for other roles (such as setup and takedown) can be asked to come early to serve as greeters.
- **Disruptors.** There's always the potential for disruption, innocent (e.g., boisterous young visitors) or not (e.g., people who dislike the ideas being explored as part of **USDAC Super PAC**). It's not very likely this will happen, but the possibility makes it an especially good idea to have backup: a team of volunteers who've practiced politely redirecting people who are causing disruption.

LINKING REFLECTION TO ACTION

Try to connect people with groups that help them take constructive action on the issues and possibilities emerging from your event. You can have printed materials available for takeaway, or once you've captured everyone's email address, send them a follow-up note with links to relevant sites.

Consider planning a follow-up gathering to explore how to use the energy your Super PAC project released. For example, hand out a flyer letting visitors know that a few weeks after your event, they're invited to bring food to share to a community space to talk about what emerged and share ideas about ways local folks could respond.

STAY CONNECTED TO THE USDAC AND BE PART OF FUTURE ACTIONS

The USDAC is committed to turning imagination into action year-round. Please join us! If you haven't already signed up as a Citizen Artist, visit our [website](#) and do it now. You can also read our [blog](#), learn about [HI-LI \(High-impact, Low-infrastructure\) projects](#) for your community, connect with [Citizen Artist Salons](#), and much, much more.

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Be sure to have Story Circle participants share their names and email addresses, so that we can keep them apprised of upcoming Actions. You'll find a sign-in sheet in the [Super PAC Public Folder](#), or you can sign people up on the [USDAC home page](#).

DOCUMENTATION AND SHARING

Encourage Super PAC participants to share images and accounts of their experience. Just post to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram with the hashtag #USDAC #SuperPAC and please, email jpgs, texts, or very short videos to hello@usdac.us. We'll feature as many as we can in the [USDAC blog](#) and via social media.

FAREWELL RITUALS

If you have the space and help to make it possible, it's wonderful to offer a closing gesture. Here's one possibility:

THE DEMOCRACY WE DESERVE

Offer a bowlful of post-its near a sign saying "What is the Democracy We Deserve?" As they leave, ask participants to take a moment to write on a post-it one response they want to bring into being. The prompt can be "One thing I want in the democracy we deserve is _____.)" Stick the completed post-its to a bulletin board so everyone can see them on the way out.



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7. DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

AVAILABLE DOWNLOADS

The following materials are available for download from the [Super PAC Public Folder](#).

When you go to that link, you'll see a button to the upper right of your window saying "Open in Drive." Click that, then click on the document you want. Under the File menu, you'll see "Download as," giving you all available options. Choose the one you want, then download to your computer. After that, you can adapt as you wish.

CHECKLISTS:

Super PAC Event Checklist

Media Promotion Checklist

SIGNS, STENCILS, NAME TAGS & OTHER GRAPHICS:

Check this folder for Super PAC social media buttons and other graphics.

MODEL FLYER & PRESS ADVISORY:

Flyer

Press Advisory

HOW-TOS AND ANCILLARY MATERIALS:

Additional guides, patterns, and details from the creators of Super PAC prototype projects.

OTHER MATERIALS:

Signup Sheet